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# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## VA Invites Veterans to Exercise their Creativity

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System is hosting their annual Veterans Creative Arts show to jury entries for the 2011 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Veterans enrolled in VA Black Hills Health Care System who are interested in entering the competition are invited to submit their entries to the Fort Meade or Hot Springs VA Medical Center's Recreation Therapy and/or Occupational Therapy Departments. Fort Meade entries must be received by February 11 and Hot Springs entries by March 7, and there is a limit of two pieces per category.

This year's National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF) will be held October 17-23 in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Veterans are invited to submit entries in the following categories: Fine Arts; Applied Arts; Crafts and Performing Arts (music, instrumental, drama and dance); and Creative Writing. The wide range of art categories included in the Festival often surprises Veterans. Veterans may submit entries in acrylic, oil or watercolor paintings, sculpture, woodworking, metalwork, jewelry and a host of other categories. There are also special art categories for the Vietnam Experience, Digital Photography/Art and Special Recognition; the latter recognizes the physical and/or mental health challenges the Veteran overcame in order to accomplish the creation of his/her art.

We are encouraging any and all local area Veterans to learn more about this wonderful opportunity. It is truly a rewarding, enriching and - for many - a healing experience.

Interested Veterans may call Mike Ellis, Recreation Therapist, (605) 347-2511, Ext. 97658; Kyle Doerges, Occupational Therapist, (605) 347-2511, Ext. 97582 at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center, or Debra Pate, Recreation Therapist (605) 745-2000, Ext. 92924 or Cliff Schunot, Vocational Rehabilitation Therapist at (605) 745-2000, Ext. 2243 at the Hot Springs VA Medical Center, for category information and show details. Anyone interested in learning more about VA's creative arts program may also visit the Festival's web site at [www.creativeartsfestival.org](http://www.creativeartsfestival.org).